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AN URBAN FAUN

JEAN WRIGHT

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AN URBAN FAUN

AN URBAN FAUN

AND OTHER POEMS

JEAN WRIGHT

BOSTON
RICHARD G. BADGER
THE GORHAM PRESS
1912

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To that ABLE SEAMAN

HENRY WATTERSON

these verses are offered

by

An Apprentice on the Sea of Literature

CONTENTS

	Page
Horace Ode XXXII	7
An Urban Faun	9
Pan Played—And Smiled	10
Margot and I	11
Sconset by-the-Sea	13
The Viking Wind	14
My Thought of Thee	15
The Butterfly	16
With a Ring	17
The Victor	18
The Desert Run	19
To Peter Pan	21
At the Window	22
The Legend of Saint Valentine	23
What Would You Do?	26
Who?	27
A Song	28
The Eternal Masculine	29
An Idle Maid	30
The Thief	32
Wild Oats	33
Ich Liebe Dich	34
Marguerite	35
Madrigal	37
The House on the Hill	38
The Golden Time	39
My Little House	40
To Austin Dobson	41

CONTENTS

	Page
Her Fan	42
To Betty	43
Rondel	44
A Valentine	45
Triolet	47
The Pledge	48
Triolet	49
Three Triolets for Kitty	50
The Debutante	51
The Specter	53
The Slave	54
In Lyric June	55
The Flood Tide	56
A Song	57
My Comrade	58
Quatrains	59
Ye Bid Me Sing	60
I Welcome Thee	61
The Joy of Life	62
Defiance	63
Love's Pendulum	64
Heine	65
Heine	66
Atta Troll	67
The Devil's Bout	69
Street Song from the French	71
La Glu	72

Oh, gracious Lyre, if ever for pastime of an idle hour, thou and I have made a song that may live for a day, come now and help me! Full well I know that thou wert stringèd first by Lesbians of renown; whose practiced fingers tuned thee to their will. Yet do I dare to strum with all untutored hands, and do invoke thee to my aid. Oh come—and shame me not.

Horace, Ode XXXII.

AN URBAN FAUN

Just a black eyed boy, with a ragged cap perched
on his tangled hair,
Whistled himself a bit of a tune, and laughed at
the biting air.
An organ grinder came along, and stopped to do
his turn;
He saw the boy and the dancing feet, and his eyes
began to burn.
He ground the merriest maddest thing that cheap
old organ knew,
And the prancing feet across the way, well, they
just fairly flew.
The lightning flash from the eyes of the boy met
the eyes of the grizzled man,
And gleaming teeth matched gleaming teeth in hon-
or of great God Pan!

PAN PLAYED—AND SMILED

A wood nymph in the forest was frighted by a faun,
And hid beneath a low-hung bough until the day should dawn.
Her sweet wild heart was shaken—alack, she knew not why—
'Til, wandering idly thro' the wood great Pan himself came by:
Passed—paused—then flung himself full length not twenty yards away;
Yawned—stretched at ease—felt for his pipes, and straight began to play
A strain so honey-sweet, so wild, so maddening withal,
That all the creatures of his realm came to the master's call.
The faun, who, searching for the nymph, had followed to the place,
Heard—stopt his willful dancing steps, and stood with raptured face:
Then—"Great God Pan, I beg of thee, lend me thy pipes awhile—
My love—my love—she flies from me—perhaps—!" Great Pan did smile
And piped a sweeter wilder strain, yet still vouchsafed no word,
Glanced down a tangled vine-grown path—up at a fluttering bird.
Lo—soft within his hand the Faun felt fingers shyly glide,
And dazed—amazed—he swiftly turned—the nymph was at his side.
Great Pan rose up and deeply yawned—smiled—put his pipes away,
And still without a word—what need—went idly on his way.

MARGOT AND I

My ship came sailing in today
  With fortune at the helm,
And my soul and my pockets are bulging out
  With the coin of the realm!

Oh, it's fit that such a victory
  Be crowned by a feast divine;
So—we're off—to that good little table d'hote
  (It's fifty cents and wine.)

Margot and I, we race for the train,
  And the train goes shooting down
As fast as it can,—for it knows we're aboard—
  In to the Heart of Town.

Then out, across the wind swept Square,
  Down through the queer old door,
And past the Chef, who smiles at us:
  —Oh, he has smiled before.

The blazing lights, the chattering crowd,
  The bland and bowing Host,
Make for a festa worth our while;
  For we have come to toast

Success unto our noble selves—
    God greet that good tramp ship,
That came in port and tossed ashore
  The cargo of the trip.

A Table for Two—in a nook by the door—
  Food that was fit for the Gods:
Ganymede, clad in a worn dress suit
  Poured prunes—but what's the odds.

We laughed, and drank a right good toast,
  Or be it prunes or wine;
And cared not a hang—the Sport 's the Thing
  When we go out to Dine!

Then a man got up and sang some songs
  That the heart of me laughed to hear:
The good old songs of my student days
  —Well, what could I do but cheer?

But nobody cared a jot what I did:
  There were other fools all round
And they laughed and sang, and one man cried
    At the rollicking sad old sound.

Margot's eyes gleamed like blue stars,
  And her cheeks grew red as a rose:
Her hand stole out and touched my hand
  And she said—What? Nobody knows.

Ah, our hearts went back to those wonderful days,
  —They were not so long ago—
When "A jug and a loaf" and "thou"—ah,
      "thou"—
  Were all that we needed to know.

That the sad old world is a glad old world,
  And full of the best kind of joy,
If love is king—in a two room flat—
  But slave to a girl and a boy.

SCONSET BY-THE-SEA

A queer old fisher village by the sea,
With long low-lying sand, where great waves boom
And break the whole year through. Wide moors
Rich with gold gorse and purple heather bloom.

The grass grown, straggling streets run in and out
Past houses weather stained and strange to see;
Built in the fashion of a sailor's heart,
Like to a ship as what's on land can be.

And all in front, each house-wife's care and pride,
A tiny garden. Rows of Poppies red,
Gay flaunting Hollyhocks and Mignonette,
And good old fashioned "Jump-Ups" rear their head.

Quaint folk, with many a tale of bygone days,
When men sailed off, and sometimes came no more;
When women stayed at home to work and wait,
And wear their hearts out on that smiling shore.

The romance of those other braver days
Hangs like a halo round the queer old town;
Shouts in the wind that comes across the sea;
Sighs in the wind that comes across the down.

Look out across the tumbling surf toward Spain
On some clear lazy golden Summer day,
A vague mirage of towers and battlements—
It is a place to dream one's life away.

THE VIKING WIND

Ah—it's hey for the open—where fresh winds
blow—
And the heart of me laughs to find,
That the world 's yet young when the world 's in
May
And one's pulses race with the wind!

Where the screaming gulls o'er the tumbling sea
Swoop down to the icy brine:
Then up—and away—for the gull is free—
And it's only man must pine.

For the open—the open—where strong winds
blow—
And the heart of me laughs to find
That the gull and the sea and the world are free
If one's pulses race with the wind!

MY THOUGHT OF THEE

The flash of white wings o'er the stormy sea
Is my thought of thee!
The thrilling song of an unseen bird—
Ah, thy voice is heard!
The blue of the sea, the blue of the skies—
Beloved, thine eyes!
The passionate heart of a blood red rose
In the garden close,
The warm sweet wind that blows from the south—
I kiss thy mouth!
—But the moon grows pale and the stars grow
cold,
And the radiant earth is gray and old:—
Ah empty arms and desolate heart,
Alas, it was written we two must part.
My soul is shaken with joy and pain—
Ah my Beloved, never again!
The flash of white wings o'er a stormy sea—
Heart of my heart, 'tis my thought of thee!

THE BUTTERFLY

Tears for a broken butterfly
  That fluttered a while in the sun:
That lived and laughed and loved for an hour,
  And found, when the hour was done,
That the idle jest meant a tortured soul,
  And a woman who could but die—
Tears for the story, as old as the world,
  Of a broken butterfly.

WITH A RING

Art weary? Send thy heart upon a quest
To find it some more fair and newer guest;
Slight is the bond that binds thee, fickle one—
Break thee thy chains and if thou would'st, be-
gone!

Sweet eyes and lips, they beckon thee today:
—Ah, if thou can'st, forget and go thy way—
Thou wooest well—go forth in all thy might.
Go forth—*my voice will haunt thee day and night.*

Find—for thou can'st—a fairer face than mine:
Look well—my face will come twixt hers and thine.
I, who should'st weep at thine inconstancy
I laugh, because I know thou lovest me!

THE VICTOR

Oh—ye—out in the world—one voice humbly sings,
That the world is wide and the world is free, and
the big sky over us rings,
And tells of the man who bares his breast and dares
the thunder bolt;
Or looks the wolf right straight in the eye, tho
the beast be at his throat
It sings of the man who stands on his feet to meet
the poisoned dart
That hurtles its way thro the biting air, and buries
its self in his heart.
It sings the Song of the Saw with teeth, that rips
and rips and rips,
But may not down the Man who laughs, and dies
with a jest on his lips.

THE DESERT RUN

You may talk of your heroes of water and fire,
And the Man behind the Gun;
But I've seen the man in the over-alls
Who's Lord of the Desert Run.
Ah, it isn't the stops at the wayside place,
Or the bustling towns that tell;
It's the endless stretches of arid waste,
And the heat like the heat of hell.
It's the pitiless sky, and the brazen sun,
And the sand that cuts like a knife,
That wring the very soul of a man,
And sap away his life.
It's the knowing that back in the cars behind,
Where women and children ride,
They trust in him as they trust in God,
And no one else beside.
With his hand on the engine's throbbing pulse,
He grips it's mighty heart:
Master of steel and iron and fire—
Master, and yet a part.
On, o'er the desert that stretches away
To the uttermost rim of things,
'Til his throat is parched and his eyeballs ache:
On, thro the dust that stings
Like the stinging hail on a winter's day;
Flaying the leathern skin
From off his face as if 'twere a child's,
Dainty and smooth and thin.
From out the dome of the cloudless sky,
The brazen and pitiless blue,
A great wind comes across the waste,
—Whence—no one ever knew.
The sand storm whirls across the plain,
And blots the big world out;

It tears in shreds the quivering air,
And it's well that his heart is stout!
But he hunches his shoulders against the wind,
And strains his smarting eyes
Along the track, the endless track,
Where the stifling sand fiend flies.
The sand blots out the whole wide world;
But it's on toward the setting sun,
For his lion heart and his iron hand
Hold on till the day's work's done.
The string of cars trail on behind
The engine that he drives,
And in the hollow of his hand
He holds a hundred lives.
So—it's on o'er the desert that stretches away
To the uttermost rim of things:
It's on, thro the brazen burning heat,
And the sand that flays and stings:
It's on and on thro the shouting wind,
On toward the setting sun;
For his lion heart and his iron hand
Hold on till the day's work's done.

TO PETER PAN

Oh spirit of joy and eternal youth,
  Would I could take your hand,
And go with you down the primrose path
  That leads to the care-free land

Where the woe of the world is never heard,
  And life has never a pain;
If I could hold your hand in mine,
  I might be a child again.

Perhaps if in your footprints light
  My faltering feet were set,
I—even I—would be a child
  And forget.

AT THE WINDOW

At my Lady's window pane
Stand I,
Lightly tap and tap again;
But the signal is in vain,
And I
Think she surely must be out,
Tho' there're traces all about of her.
There's her kerchief—There's her fan,
Open music—ah, it can
Move her
More than words or sighs from me;
Green am I with jealousy!
She wrote
Yonder letter. Happy man
Who with eager eyes will scan
That note;
Ah, be tender, but beware,
For she's fickle as she's fair.
Have a care, or you'll discover
That to be my Lady's lover,
Tho' 'tis bliss;
Tho' 'tis pleasure, yet 'tis pain;
You may plead and plead again
For a kiss.
Her dainty finger tips
You may touch, but not her lips.
Though you love my Lady dearly,
Though you woo my Lady rarely,
You'll be met by gay disdain.
My Lady's fair and gracious,
But she's haughty and capricious,
And the man who woos my Lady woos in vain.

THE LEGEND OF SAINT VALENTINE

Once on a time—as I have heard men say—
There was a story told of that brave day
When the great war king Claudius held his sway.
He drove his chariot through the streets of Rome,
Nor spoke, but by his presence bade men come;
And shamed the wretch who lingered in his home,
Wasting his manhood on the weakening charms
Of wife and child, of clinging lips and arms—
—The tender things that fenced him safe from harms.
Years passed, and war upon the heels of war
Fast followed, for Claudius, conqueror,
Greedy of power, and trusting in his star,
Swore he, and Rome, should conquer till he died.
But, so the story runs, a mighty tide
Of fierce rebellion rose to meet his pride.
The Roman warriors vowed to fight no more;
Demanded peace, that each man might restore
The home, the love, the life, was his before.
Sheer stunned by rage, upon his golden throne
Sate Claudius. Then, words came, a stammering groan
To his high Gods the rebels should atone.
That hour his heralds, to the sullen crowd
His edict carried; crying it aloud
No man might wed. Beggar and prince, proud
Lord and slave, to each and every one
The door was shut. E'en he for whom that sun
Would have gone down with all his joys begun.

Thus, in one hour, had whirled the wheel of fate.
Behind his palace walls stern Claudius sate,
The while a love sick nation stormed his very gate;
And wandered up and down in every street,
That had of old but echoed martial feet—
—Now, like some lane where rustic lovers meet.
'Neath every wall that formed a rugged screen
A lovelorn pair by pitying eyes was seen,
Who kissed, and vowed, and kissed again, I ween.
The very air breathed sigh and tender vow;
The very trees in sympathy did bow;
The very moon was at the full, I trow.
E'en those coy maids who'd flouted love before
Now pined to wed; all coquetry foreswore,
And burned to prove how well they might adore
A lord and master. Yearned to bear the yoke;
While maid to maid in trembling whisper spoke
The tragic tale of some brave heart was broke.
Gay gallants that had sipped from flower to flower,
Now languished for one Love, and passed each hour
Longing to spend their days in one dear bower.
Complacent matrons, wed this many a day,
Neglected home and husband—so they say—
Listening some plaint, in hope to find a way.
Stern warriors, glorified by many a scar,
Won in some fierce but half-forgotten war,
Forsook the fireside, wandering near and far;
Pled with pale priests to flout that edict dread,
Call on their God, and e'er that day was sped,
Defy the King, and all true lovers wed.
But not one dared; and four long days dragged past;

Four dreadful days was lovelorn Rome aghast.
When lo—a monk, obscure and humble, cast
Aside his prayer-won peace; and coming forth,
Bade all true lovers come, from south or north,
That he might bless their love. Crying 'twas worth
His one poor wretched life an hundred fold
Might he restore those happy days of old;
And—would God help him—wedded bliss uphold.
'Twas Valentine. Who, in his icy cell,
Spite of his vigils, let his sad thoughts dwell
On those far days when he had loved too well.
The brave news spread through Rome like some glad song.
Clad in his rusty habit, all day long,
Good Valentine did bless the joyous throng.
Two days he stood within the market place,
And gave his benediction, and God's grace
To all who came. Then turned his radiant face
And raptured eyes, to Him who dwelt above,
And met his doom—the thing for which he strove—
The first great martyr to the cause of love.
So—as the story runs—died Valentine;
The martyred Saint, around whose lovely shrine
Do all true lovers to this day entwine
Fair wreathes of flowers; and precious incense burn,
Hand clasped in hand, the while they pray, and yearn
For that sweet martyrdom himself did earn.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

"For forty days and forty nights the rain it kept
a-drappin';"
And, much as Noah wanted to, it kept the man
from nappin'.
So, finally he reached the point of utter desperation!
Sweet Mrs. Noah talked night and day, and of-
fered consolation:
She chatted, to "divert his mind," she soothed and
petted him;
She even made a little jest of "Being in the swim."
Now, Noah was a patient man. But when the rain
keeps drappin',
It seems to me that even he might be excused for
nappin'.
But while he napped, he ran aground—of course
'twas shallow water—
So in he slipped, and waded off—of course, he
hadn't oughter.

WHO?

The sun kissed the clover,
  Each blossom blushed red—
For kisses bring blushes,
  'Tis said.

Oh young maids are charming,
  And ribbons are blue,
And boys are still saucy
  At blithe twenty-two.

The sun kissed the clover—
  Sweet Nancy blushed, too,
Now who kissed sweet Nancy
  I wonder—don't you?

A SONG

The day seems filled with mad mirth,
  The merry breezes start;
There's sunshine on the glad earth,
  There's sunshine in my heart.

The day seems hardly sober,
  There's gold on every tree;
It brings the world October—
  It brings my Love to me.

THE ETERNAL MASCULINE.

Of all the glowing summer time
The hot sun is the God,
Receiving tribute of the earth
In sheaves of golden rod.

For Summer-time is feminine,
And flatters when she can,
Remembering while she pays her tythes,
The Son God is a man.

AN IDLE MAID

An Allegory

Along a straight and narrow path,
  One Summer afternoon,
A pretty little maiden strolled,
  And hummed an idle tune.

She chased a painted butterfly—
  Forgot—and plucked a flower.
Tossed it aside; because she heard
  A Bird sing from its bower.

She laughed because the sun shone;
  Then heaved a tiny sigh,
Because a filmy cloud had come
  Across the Summer sky.

And then she stopped in wonder.
  For underneath the hedge,
An endless row of new pink bricks
  Stood temptingly on edge.

She held her muslin skirts aside,
  And gave a dainty kick,
That barely touched, but toppled down
  The nearest new pink brick.

The first brick knocked the second,
  The second struck the third;
And then the sound of falling bricks,
  All down the line she heard.

And when the sound was finished,
  The little maid did run
Along the line of fallen bricks,
  To see what she had done.

Alack-a-day! Upon the ground,
  She saw, in scattered parts,
The jagged bits of broken vows,
  And several broken hearts.

Three kisses, torn asunder;
  A lock of golden hair;
A bunch of letters, torn across,
  Lay scattered here and there.

A crushed red rose; a butterfly,
  That trailed a broken wing;
And underneath the last pink brick,
  A bent and twisted ring.

Alack-a-day! What havoc,
  To come from one small kick,
That one sweet idle little maid,
  Gave one nice new pink brick.

THE THIEF

I'm half afraid, my dainty maid,
To venture near you,
You've spread a snare with your golden hair
That makes me fear you.

Fell danger lies in your bright eyes,
For my undoing,
The words won't come, and I am dumb,
When I'd be wooing.

Your pretty lips, where Cupid trips,
Look wondrous winning,
To fly were best and wisest, lest
I should be sinning.

Yet would you scold if I were bold?
—I'll be explicit—
One little kiss you could not miss,
—There—do you miss it!

WILD OATS

Ah, sad the sight must ever be
  Of virtue led away.
That humble worth and industry
  Should ever go astray!

And yet I saw, this very hour
  —I blush to tell the tale—
A tippling Bumble Bee half drunk
  On golden rod cocktail.

ICH LIEBE DICH

"Ich liebe dich," was all he said,
And why I should have blushed so red,
I cannot say—I do not know;
The words could not have moved me so—
It must have been his look instead.

But why should I have hung my head,
And really almost felt afraid,
When what he meant I did not know,
"Ich liebe dich."

"Three German words" they were, he said,
Teach me the meaning? No, instead
The words themselves he'd teach, and so
The meaning soon enough I'd know."
And soon my faltering lips he led
To say the words himself had said—
"Ich liebe dich."

MARGUERITE

With your dainty bit of sewing,
Marguerite,
And your smile, half shy, half knowing,
Wholly Sweet,
And the rings of golden hair
On your forehead broad and fair,
Marguerite.

Ah, your voice is soft and low,
Marguerite,
But it thrills me thro' and thro'
Marguerite,
Like the cooing of a dove
Speaking to its mate of love,
Marguerite.
Your eyes are wells of truth,
Marguerite.
And what they say, in sooth,
Is so sweet,
That my heart goes out to meet you,
And with tenderest love doth greet you,
Marguerite.
The bloom upon your cheek,
Ah, my Sweet,
Nestles in the rose heart deep,
Marguerite,
There's a dimple in you chin
That my heart just fits within,
Ma petite.

From the ring upon your hand,
Marguerite,

To the dainty little slippers
On your feet,
And the golden crown above them,
I love them all—I love them,
Marguerite.

When from off your winsome face,
Marguerite,
Ruthless time has torn youth's grace,
Marguerite,
Still within my bosom's core,
Love will live for evermore,
Marguerite.

MADRIGAL.

Turn, turn, thou happy Earth,
  Bring to me the morrow—
Day of joyousness and mirth—
  Banish every sorrow—
For tomorrow brings my love
  —Sing ye birds, together—
For tomorrow brings my love,
  In the sunny weather—
Earth and air and birds are glad
  That my love is coming—
Speed him on, ye brisk west winds,
  —Wait not for the gloaming—
Send him to me while the day
  Yet is in its dawning,
Quickly turn, oh, happy Earth,
  Bring to me the morning.

THE HOUSE ON THE HILL

Over the town in the valley,
And the river broad and still,
The home of my heart stands empty,
A house on a windswept hill.
The bitter rains are falling
Upon it where it stands,
And the sullen stream is crawling
Past brown and barren lands.

The echo of song and story
Rings thro' each wide bare room,
And the ghost of a bygone summer
Lurks in the shuttered gloom,
Where once a flood of sunshine
Poured in and had its way,
With naught but leaves to hinder
Through all the golden day.

Out on the lonely terrace
Comes with the coming night,
The wraith of idle music,
A far off faint delight.
Hark to the wild young laughter
That rings from hill to hill!
'Twas only the wind in the valley;
It has passed, and the world is still.

Oh strong west wind and sunshine!
Oh night and the starry sky!
Brief and bright was the summer,
Too soon it has passed me by.
Over the town in the valley,
And the river broad and still,
The home of my heart stands empty,
A house on a windswept hill.

THE GOLDEN TIME

Youth and love and a summer day—
  What fairer gifts could the gods bestow?
Ah, could the golden time but stay,
Of youth and love and a summer day!

If the grass would cover the brown old ground,
And the sun would shine the whole year round,
If youth lent wings to the dancing breeze,
And love gave lips to the whispering trees,
If youth and love would never leave us,
No fairer gifts the gods could give us!

MY LITTLE HOUSE.

From out the far off lands beyond the great Cascades,
A thousand miles or more from any where,
Comes the soft wind the Indians called "Chinook"—
"The soft west wind that blows away all care."

The Chinook Tribe is gone this many a year,
Gone to the happy Hunting Ground they hope to find;
And I—the great Atlantic at my feet,
Dream idly of their legend of the wind.

Wherefore—I call my little house, set down
In meadows sweet with grass and new mown hay,
"Chinook". For 'cross the thousand miles there comes
All through the night and through the long bright day

A wind; that through wide open doors sweeps in,
Lingers a moment, idles out again,
And carries with it, out into the world
What ever be of sadness or pain.

Leaving my house and heart all sweet and clean,
Leaving the sunny meadows kind and fair,
Leaving me peaceful days and tranquil nights.
"Oh soft west wind that blows away all care."

TO AUSTIN DOBSON

For Austin's pen I'd give my eyes,
And deem it little sacrifice
  Rondeau, Ballade and Villanelle
  Would sure be subject to the spell
Wherewith he bids them rise.
The quill on which his fancy flies,
And rhymes on all 'twixt earth and skies,
  Would skill my clumsy hand as well.
    —For Austin's pen!—

Hid in that stem—for which these sighs—
May be forgot 'til now, there lies
  Refrain from Rondeau—Villanelle,
  Perhaps a rhyme or two as well,
Trifling to him, to me a prize
    Were Austin's pen.

HER FAN

Ah, Kate, your fan's a flimsy thing,
A gauzy, sparkling, useless toy,
Which one rude touch would quite destroy;
The plaything of an idle hour,
And yet me thinks, you know it's power,
Therefore I sing.

Ah, Kate, your fan's a tricksy thing;
It blows a kiss, or wafts a sigh,
Flutters a curl distractingly;
Is proud or kind, or false or true,
I can but love the fan—and you,
Therefore I sing.

Ah, Kate, you're sceptered with a fan;
—'Tis fragile, have a care—
A dangerous thing in hands so fair,
Potent it is to wound or bless,
To deal a stab or shy caress
To foolish man.

But, Kate, you're sceptered with a fan:
—'Tis fragile, have a care—
A dangerous thing in hands so fair,
And something which entails a throne.
You cannot rule your realm alone,
And who is there to regulate
A Queen and her affairs of state?
Prince Consorts can.

TO BETTY

With Her Looking Glass

Sweet Maid, small wonder with Narcissus' eyes
You look, and what you find most dearly prize!
  Ah, would you turn that eager gaze on me;
  The self same lovely image you would see:
For my poor eyes two human mirrors are:
Where, as a lonely pool reflects a star,
  Your sweet resemblance lives. Aye, near or far—
For, lacking you, your lover to console,
Your face looks out the windows of my soul!
  Sweet heart, I swear it—for your lovely face
  Within my soul has found a dwelling place.

RONDEL

My heart a willing captive lies
  In twisted chains of golden hair;
  Grim warders twain two deep blue eyes,
Stern guardians of my prison lair.

Or if rebelling, I despair,
  Quelled by a look of sweet surprise,
  My heart a willing captive lies,
In twisted chains of golden hair.

My dauntless spirit would despise
  To yield itself to dull despair;
The prisoner who from fetters flies
  Like mine, is found extremely rare;
My heart a willing captive lies
  In twisted chains of golden hair.

A VALENTINE

Oh, for the glad, the bold, the free,
The bygone days of Chivalrie!
When each brave knight
In armour dight
Extolled his Fair o'er land and sea.
If it were then, and I thy knight,
I'd enter in the lists,
Where every lovely knight insists
His lady fair is fairer far
Than all the other ladies are.

Met in the tourney's charmed ring,
—Of which the olden minstrels sing—
With silver shield
And spear, to wield
And break a lance
For one sweet glance
From lovely eyes
For him who dies
For love's sweet sake, the lutes would wake
Glad echoes of his fame and glory
In many a song and many a story.

If thou would'st have me for thy knight,
On my broad shield all silver bright,
Who came could read,
Whate'er his speed,
The legend it should bear.
I'd mount my steed and fight my way,
By night and day,
'Gainst friend and foe. And work him woe
Who dared disclaim
My lady's fame
As Queen of all the fair and gay.

With helmet off and pennant lowered,
In courtesy to thee, my Sweet,
Breathing thy name, I'd draw my sword
And lay it at thy feet.

TRIOLET

'Tis the key to my heart,
Don't be careless and lose it,
Ah keep it apart,
'Tis the key to my *heart,*
Gentle Sir, if you're smart
And yet do not refuse it,
'Tis the key to *my* heart,
Don't be careless, and LOSE it.

THE PLEDGE

Affection's pledge, thou art, my rose,
And not a lover's token.
One scarce could guess, unless one knows,
Affection sent thee, pretty rose.
From that faint blush one would suppose
There were sweet words unspoken.
"Affection's pledge", art thou, my rose
And not a lover's token.

TRIOLET

Ah, twinkling little star,
  Shine on my lover for me.
Bear him a message afar,
  Ah, twinkling little star;
Remind him he said there but are
My glances reflected in thee.
Ah, twinkling little star,
  Shine on my lover for me.

THREE TRIOLETS FOR KITTY

I see the love light in her eyes
E'er she can know 'tis there.
I like to take her by surprise
And see the love light in her eyes,
For Kitty thinks it most unwise
To let me "think she'd care."
I see the love light in her eyes
E'er she can know 'tis there.

I kiss her pretty pouting lips
E'er she can say me nay.
The cup of bliss too often slips!
I kiss her pretty pouting lips,
And catch her dainty finger tips
E'er I can turn away!
I kiss her pretty pouting lips
E'er she can say me nay.

I slip my arm about her waist;
"I'm stronger far than she!"
I know it well, and so make haste
To slip my arm about her waist;
"To win by force is wretched taste!"
—Yet Kitty lets it be—
I slip my arm about her waist,
I'm stronger far than she.

THE DEBUTANTE

The Debutante sat at the table wide,
With an elderly youth on either side,
  And she listened and listened to what they said;
  And drooped her lashes and hung her head;
And flutered her laces and rustled her silk;
And twisted her glasses, and crumpled her bread,
  And drank her soup with a tiny spoon,
  And used her knives and forks too soon,
And found herself with unending shame,
And an oyster fork, when the coffee came.
  But her hair was gold and her eyes were blue,
  And her teeth were pearls, and well she knew
That Mama had paid a mighty price
For her gown and her gloves, and they both were nice.
And she wondered and wondered if men could know.
And she found they did. For they told her so.
  Her little heart fluttered within her breast,
  And she drooped her eyes and turned away,
  And yearned and yearned for something to say.
But the Hostess gathered the ladies' eyes,
And by ones and two she saw them rise;
  And she wondered and wondered how they could know,
  With one accord, just the time to go.
—Her little knees shook, but she did her best—
She pushed her coffee cup out of sight,
(The coffee was strong and black as night.)
  She turned her head with a timid grace,
  And a yearning look upon her face;
She fluttered her laces and rustled her silk,
And she said, "How I wish I had some milk."

Then she smiled at the Two as she turned away,
With an air of pride. She had said her say.
And her hair was gold, and her eyes were blue,
And her gown was good. So they said "She'll
Do."

THE SPECTER

Across the smiling summer fields, where sun and wind are free,
Out of the woodland, moist and cool; across the moonlit sea;
From each and every cranny of this my house and home
A thousand Imps are leering the fact that they have come.
The songs, the jocund laughter—all that I thought so gay,
Are idle things and empty, in the broad light of day.
My book, my pipe, my hammock, my boat, my horse —e'en She
Who was my Fairest Lady, seem colorless to me.
My love that flamed so fiercely, has glimmered and gone out:
I lie and wonder dully "What Was It All About?"

A Specter stalking grimly, has laid his hand on me,
And through my half shut glazing eyes his face I dimly see.
His hand of steel and velvet is closing on my throat.
Well, let it close—who cares—not I. For never drifting boat
On any tideless river, or sullen placid sea,
E'er drifted so at random, or half so carelessly.
My Specter? Would you know Him? Nay, run while there is time—.
You wont? Then quickly throw away this most unrythmic rhyme.
Or read it, if you must then—it matters not—not a bit;
For some day you will see Him—His velvet hand will hit.

Yes, through the sunlit mornings and in the star
bright night,
The Ghost of Ennui stalks abroad, and all men
feel His blight.
See—I'm His helpless captive: He hales me to His
lair.
Well, let Him hale—
I do not care—

THE SLAVE

Men and women—out in the world—listen to one
that sings
The twice-told tale of the captured bird, that dash-
es with impotent wings,
'Gainst the jewelled wires of the gilded cage; where
she flew in one day,
And, idly laughing, snapped the door, and bade love
go his way.
That eats the bread of discontent, tho' it be white
and fine,
And drinks the dregs of bitterness that poison the
priceless wine.
Whose beauty may blaze as the blazing sun—but
the pallid years drag by
Like some creeping loathsome slimy snail—God—
pity—and let her die.

IN LYRIC JUNE

Again thou comest, lovely June;
And with thee all thy sunny days,
Thy birds and bees and butterflies:
The new warmed earth is gay for thee,
The air is mild, and the soft wind
Is glad of thee—Ah, lovely June.
Thou should'st be merry, lovely June;
Thy birds sing songs of joy the whole day long;
Thy fragrant nights are cool and dark and still;
And yet, so sad thou seemest, lovely June,
My heart is like to break with nameless pain.

THE FLOOD TIDE

If the high Gods will only let me go
While the flood tide of life is here!
To go—while all the blood is singing in my veins,
While heart and brain and soul are yet aflame,
And all life has to give is in my grasp.
To go when night comes and the moon is at the full,
Drawing the passionate tide. To go
When day comes and the great sun shines on high
And wild winds race across the open plain;
When love at the flood tide grips the soul of me
And all life has to give is in my grasp.
I do demand, what ever gods ye be
I need not wait until the ebb tide comes.
Alas, mine is the tribe of the unquiet heart—
I could not cleave with even strokes the outgoing tide.

A SONG

Why should'st thou fill to-day with sorrow,
Because tomorrow
We part.
Why wilt thou think that bitter thought,
—That bitter thought—
"We part."
Can'st thou not fill to-day with gladness,
And cast all sadness
Away.
Drink the last drop of thy rich measure
Of Joy and Pleasure,
To-day.

Drink and be merry—stifle thy sorrow:
—After tomorrow
We die.
Thou shalt not give, with all thy longing,
—This fair day wronging—
One sigh.
Why should'st thou fill to-day with sorrow
Because tomorrow
We part.
Tho' it is written we two shall sever,
'Tis not forever,
My heart.

MY COMRADE

Shall I give up the very joy of life,
Withhold my faith where it were well bestowed,
  Forego the essence of all loveliness,
    Because an empty shadow stands between.

Courage and truth and honor all are his,
And the simplicity that comes of these.
  And I have but to stretch my hand to him,
    Only to stretch my hand, and all is mine.

And mine the peace that comes of perfect trust.
—He makes no idle boasting of his love,
  No empty vows, and yet if need should come
    This man would die for me. And this I know.

QUATRAINS

To Omar Khayyam

A bunch of Roses and a Cup of Wine,
A glowing Lamp to burn before Thy Shrine,
  On wisest of all Poets—Human Wise—
Omar Khayyam. A votary of Thine.

Sits at Thy feet and burns this Oil to Thee.
Fingers the Roses, touching reverently
  Because Thou may'st have touched from what
    they came.
Tastes of the Wine, because Thou sang it's song to
    me.

Old Omar, Thou did'st live so long ago.
Yet Life was then as Now, and Thou did'st know
  All of it's Passion, all it's bitter Pain,
All of it's Loveliness, it's Joy and Woe.

And in Thy higher Wisdom, was't content
To sit apart and smile. With calm intent
  To sing of Roses and the Summer-time.
To sing of what they Were, not what they Meant.

The ruby Wine of Wisdom bubbles up
Out of the fullness of Thy brimming Cup.
  Let Thy poor Servant of this later Age,
Have for his better comfort one small sup.

YE BID ME SING

Sweetheart, ye bid me sing a Song to show
What Love is. Have Ye Lived yet do not Know.
Love is the Lord of Life. And at a Touch
Puts Laughter in the Heart—or is it Woe.

A Thing to Play with and a Thing of Fears.
A Thing that soothes the Wound the while it Sears.
A Winter's Pastime and a Summer's Joy.
An Hour-Time's Laughter and a Life-Time's Tears.

A Cruel-Tenderness, a Bitter-Sweet.
A jeweled Chain that clings and clogs the Feet,
A shimmering Cobweb spun around the Heart,
Tightening the stifling Strands with every Beat.

Great Love for Idleness blots out the Sun.
Merges the Millions of the World in One,
Takes in his careless Hands a Human Soul.
Tosses the Toy aside. The Song is Done.

I WELCOME THEE

Again Thou comest, lovely June, Again
The level fields are fair with ripening grain.
  The birds sing Songs of Joy the whole Day long.
And all the world to Welcome Thee is fain.

All Day the lordly Sun shines from the Sky.
All Night the white Moon sails across the Sky.
  All Day the hot West Wind blows glad and strong.
All Night the soft South Wind does naught but sigh.

The sunny mornings come, ah, lovely June,
And melt into the splendid Afternoon;
  The purple radiance of the Evening fades,
The dark still Nights are gone from us too soon.

Ah delicate sweet month, can'st Thou not see,
That every Bird and Butterfly and Bee,
  That every Blossom on the far Hill side—
That all the new-warmed Earth is gay for Thee.

Again Thou comest, lovely June. Again
To welcome Thee with Rapture I am fain.
  And yet, so sad Thou seemest, lovely June,
My Heart is like to break with nameless Pain.

THE JOY OF LIFE

What is the joy of life—the immortal lure—
That every man would stake his soul to gain?
To one, it is the getting of much gold:
To one, it is brave battling with his kind.
To one, the strain and struggle of the town:
To one, the idling through a summer day:
To one, to take the woman that he loves:
To one, the cloister: or the artist's brush—
The pen—the sword—the wind, the sea, the sky—
What is the immortal lure, the joy of life;
That every man would stake his soul to gain.

DEFIANCE

Peace—Peace—Ye say—'Tis not for Peace I sigh.
I want no dull contented lot, not I.
For I am Young—Ah know Ye what that means?
For I am Young, and all my Hopes are high.

Nay Death, I will not. So that Life be long
To Do, to Dare, to Suffer and be Strong,
Passion and Pain and Sorrow—let them come—
I swear that I will meet them with a song.

My Cup is brimming up with heady Wine.
And 'round the Rim my eager fingers twine
The Flowers of Life-fair Laughter and sweet Love,
And while Fate holds her Hand the day is Mine.

LOVE'S PENDULUM.

German

From the slightest of emotions,
  By a sudden transformation,
To the most unbounded passion,
  And the tenderest relation!

From the most unbounded passion,
  By a sudden transformation,
To the slightest of emotions,
  And a rather strained relation.

Ah, if thou wert my wedded wife,
Much envied would'st thou be;
For thou should'st live for pure pastime,
And fare right joyously.

Thy scoldings and thy stormings
I'd suffer patiently:
But if thou should'st not praise my songs,
Then would I part from thee.

I called the Devil, and he came,
With wonderment his form I scan;
He is not ugly, is not lame,
He is a dear and charming man
Just in the prime of life, and so
Quite up in the ways of the world, you know.
Talking of Church and State with tact—
A bit of diplomat, in fact.
No wonder he's pale, and hollow his eyes,
Since Sanscrit and Hegel his studies comprise.
His favorite poet is still Fouque,
But with the critices he will not bother;
He has turned that over to his grandmother,
His dear grandmother, Hecate.
To my legal efforts he gave his praise,
Said he'd thought of the law in his younger days.
He vowed my acquaintance an honor and credit,
And bowed with an infinite grace as he said it.
Then he asked if the Spanish Embassador
Had not presented us one to the other?
I looked with more care than I had before,
And found in him my friend and brother.

ATTA TROLL

A Fragment—Heinrich Heine

In the black and rocky valley
Rests the water deep and silent,
While from out the gloomy heavens
Look the pale stars melancholy.
Night and silence. Sounds of oar strokes.
Like a secret swims the ferry;
And the keeper's two young nieces
Pull the boat with arms right stalwart.
They pull joyously and briskly,
In the dusk their strong arms gleaming
Naked in the pallid starlight;
And their great blue eyes are shining.
At my side sits pale Lascaro,
Sits as usual pale and silent.
Then the dread thought shudders through me—
Is Lascaro then a dead man?
Am I dead, and am I shipping
With these ghostly strange attendants,
Over to the pallid kingdom
Of the shades, myself a shadow?
And this black and silent water
Is it then the dismal Styx.
Do Proserpine's attendants
Ferry souls in place of Charon.
No. I am not dead nor dying.
All my soul is wildly glowing,
Shouts aloud, and flames up madly
With the burning fire of life!
And these girls, who swing the oars
Lustily, and with much laughter,
Jestingly, with blue eyes shining,

Sprinkle me with drops of water,
These fresh buxom girls are truly
Not Proserpine's attendants.
Ghostly Cats from Hell could never
Be so full of life and laughter.
But, that I might quite assure me
Of their upper-worldliness;
Be convinced beyond all doubting
That life riots yet with me;
On each little red cheek-dimple
Hastily my lips I pressed.
Then I made the sage conclusion—
I kiss—I know I live.

THE DEVIL'S BOUT

German

Once into this world of ours
  Five hundred thousand devils came;
But, alas, not one poor devil
  Had a farthing to his name.

They began to curse and whimper,
  Knowing not what they should do.
"God in Heaven," laughed old Satan,
  "Really quite too stupid for you!"

Each one scratched his ear and whimpered,
  'Truly things are at the worst.
If nobody knows good counsel,
  Gemeni, then we are lost."

Then spoke Pipifax, the small one,
  "Really quite too stupid you,
I alone—yes—I alone
  Am a devil 'comme il faut!' "

"Ye have thirst, and would be drinking?
  That's the deep torment of deep Hell.
See ye yonder windows blinking?
  Of the wine cup they would tell."

"See, there is the hotel cellar,
  It will give us quarters fine;
And tho' we have not a farthing,
  Yet mine Host has right good wine."

"Though the oaken doors are closed,
Iron bars across the gate,
Through the key hole we will enter;
Who of you will hesitate.

Sang they then in wildest chorus,
"Naught surpasses wine and love!"
And they drank there, con amore,
Till the day came up above.

When the cocks began their crowing,
And the flasks were empty all,
And the devils were all drunken,
Then came Satan to the hall.

Into every empty bottle,
'Though the drunken devils squealed,
Thrust them down, and forced the cork in.
Forced it in, and wired and sealed.

Five times hundred thousand devils
Fume and struggle all in vain,
And each crystal devil's prison
Is a bottle of Champagne.

When the corks are popping gaily,
Lively songs resound about
Joy rings out in the wildest chorus,
Yes—then is the devil out.

STREET SONG FROM THE FRENCH

The pretty one who loves me,
Ah, she'd be rash indeed,
To go against my wishes
In thought or deed.

If I beneath her window
Should sing my tender song,
She must be quick and smiling,
—I"not stay long.

The pretty one who loves me
Must spy me from afar,
And run to greet me sweetly,
—If not—tra la
Tra la la la la la la!

LA GLU

Brittany Folk Song

Once upon a time there was a poor boy,
—Oulie oulai oulie oula—
Once upon a time there was a poor boy,
Who loved one
Who loved him not.

She said to him "bring me to-day,"
—Oulie oulai oulie oula—
She said to him "bring me to-day
The heart of thy mother
For my dog."

He goes to his home and his mother kills,
—Oulie oulai oulie oula—
He goes to his home and his mother kills,
Seizes the heart
And runs away.

In running away down he falls
—Oulie oulai oulie oula—
In running away down he falls
And the heart
Rolls on the ground.

As it rolls it speaks to him—
—Oulie oulai oulie oula—
As it rolls it speaks to him—
Listen thou
To what it says.

As it rolls it weeping says,
—Oulie oulai oulie oula—
As it rolls it weeping says,
"Art thou hurt
My poor child?"

One cannot be a dying swan
Off hand—
One can't become a Raphael
On demand—
One can but do one's best—
And do no more—
So patience, Gentle Public,
We implore—
And bear in mind we meekly beg of you,
Wise Buddha's rule—
(I think it's No. 2.)
"Kill not—for pity's sake, and lest you slay
The meanest thing upon its upward way."

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